

REMARKS

Claims 1-19 were pending in the present application. Claims 1-5, 7-12, and 17-19 have been amended. The amendment to the claims is fully supported by the specification, as filed. No new subject matter has been introduced. After entry of the amendment, claims 1-19 remain pending in this application.

Objections to the Claims

The Examiner indicated that the numbering of the claims in the previously presented claim set was non-consecutive. The listing of claims presented herewith is numbered consecutively. Claims 4 and 5 were objected to for lack of clarity as to their dependencies. Claims 4 and 5 have been amended to depend from claims 2 and 3, respectively. Applicants respectfully request that these objections to the claims be withdrawn.

Elections/Restrictions

The Examiner has required restriction between the following groups:

Group I: claims 1-14, 17 and 19, drawn to a device for handling liquid sample, and a method of using the same.

Group II: claims 15 and 16, drawn to a method of performing a chemical or biochemical assay involving a reaction between an analyte in a sample and one more reagents.

Group III: claim 18, drawn to a method of pre-treating a liquid sample, prior to performing a chemical or biochemical assay.

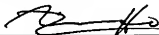
Applicants hereby provisionally elect Group I, claims 1-14, 17, and 19 for continued examination, with traverse. Applicants respectfully assert that a search of all the groups would not present an undue burden on the Office. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In the unlikely event that the transmittal form is separated from this document and the Patent Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, Applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorize the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to **Deposit Account No.: 03-1952** referencing **514862002600**. However, the Commissioner is not authorized to charge the cost of the issue fee to the Deposit Account.

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Respectfully submitted,

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